

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-33. (canceled)

Claim 34. (currently amended) A process for maturing dendritic cells, comprising:

(a) **isolating mononuclear cells from blood**

(b) culturing **said** mononuclear cells, together with hyaluronic acid fragments, in order to cause **[[the]]said** mononuclear cells to mature irreversibly into **said** dendritic cells,

wherein **each of** said hyaluronic acid fragments ~~comprises~~ **is** from **2,000-5,000**

Da 2 to 12 building blocks, and wherein said building block comprises D-glucuronic acid and N-acetyl-D-glucosamine, linked by a β 1-3 glycosidic bond.

Claim 35. (canceled)

Claim 36. (currently amended) The process of claim 34, wherein **[[the]]said** mononuclear cells are isolated from a leukocyte concentrate using a density gradient.

Claim 37. (currently amended) The process of claim 36, wherein **[[the]]said** density gradient is a Ficoll density gradient.

Claim 38. (currently amended) The process of claim 34, wherein **[[the]]said** mononuclear cells possess a CD14 surface marker and are **further** concentrated, **after isolation from said leukocyte concentrate,** using an antibody that is directed against **[[the]]said** CD14 surface marker.

Claim 39. (currently amended) The process of claim 34, wherein ~~[[the]]~~said mononuclear cells possess a CD14 surface marker and are cultured in a medium that contains GM-CSF at a concentration from 5,000 to 10,[[]]000 U/mL and IL-4 at a concentration from 100 to 1,000 U/mL.

Claim 40. (currently amended) The process of claim 34, wherein ~~[[the]]~~said hyaluronic acid fragments each contain from 1 to 10 aminodisaccharides.

Claim 41. (currently amended) The process of claim 34, wherein ~~[[the]]~~said mononuclear cells possess a CD14 surface marker and are cultured for 72 hours to 7 days in a medium containing GM-CSF and IL-4.

Claim 42. (currently amended) The process of claim 34, wherein ~~[[the]]~~said mononuclear cells are cultured together with said hyaluronic acid fragments for at least 48 hours.

Claim 43. (currently amended) The process of claim 34, wherein ~~[[the]]~~said hyaluronic acid fragments are chemically modified.

Claims 44-56. (canceled)

Claim 57. (currently amended) A ~~vaccine~~ pharmaceutical composition comprising dendritic cells prepared by:

(a) isolating mononuclear cells from blood

(b) culturing said mononuclear cells, together with hyaluronic acid fragments, in order to cause said mononuclear cells to mature irreversibly into said dendritic cells,

wherein each of said hyaluronic acid fragments is from 2,000-5,000 Da.

Claims 58-59. (canceled)

Claim 60. (previously presented) The process of claim 34, wherein said hyaluronic acid fragments are present at a concentration of 30 to 50 μ g/ml.

Claim 61. (new) The pharmaceutical composition of claim 57, further comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient.